

Remarks

This paper is responsive to the non-final Office Action mailed on June 27, 2006.

Claims 1, 3-5, and 7-11 are pending. Claims 2 and 6 have been cancelled. Claims 1, 3-5 and 8 have been amended. Claims 10 and 11 are new. Applicant appreciates the Examiner's indication in the Office Action that claims 2-5 are allowable. In view of the following remarks, as well as the foregoing amendments, Applicant respectfully submits that this application is in complete condition for allowance and requests reconsideration of the application in this regard.

Claim Rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

Claims 1 and 7 over McAndrew and Herring

Claims 1 and 7 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *McAndrew* (U.S. Patent No. 6,536,825) in view of *Herring* (U.S. Patent No. 3,193,673). The Examiner admits on page 2 of the Office Action that *McAndrew* fails to disclose "an electroluminescent lamp mounted to the flip cover, such that, when the lamp illuminates the first switch when the flip cover is in the opened position." However, the Examiner contends that *Herring* remedies this deficiency of *McAndrew* because, as stated on page 3 of the Office Action, it would have been obvious "to mount a lamp in the flip cover such that when the cover is opened the switches in the console are illuminated by the lamp because this is for purpose of ensuring that the proper switch is operated when the car is darkened." Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the subject matter of dependent claim 6, which is not subject to this rejection. Therefore, Applicant requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 6 and 8 over McAndrew and Herring in view of Centofante

Claims 6 and 8 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *McAndrew* and *Herring* further in view of *Centofante* (U.S. Patent No. 6,139,304). The Examiner admits on page 3 of the Office Action that *McAndrew* and *Herring* fail to disclose “molding the lamp into the flip cover.” However, the Examiner contends that “*Centofante* teaches a molding process for molding lamps or LEDs into components by forming a mold cavity with the components and leds located therein and then injecting a molten polymer resin through the gate in the mold sections to fill a portion of the mold cavity unfilled by the electroluminescent lamp and then opening the mold sections after the resin solidifies and ejecting the component from the mold.” As further stated on page 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner believes that it would have been obvious “to utilize injection molding to mold the lamp into the flip cover because the purpose of mounting and illumination would not be altered and the molding of plastic or resin articles, such as those forming the flip cover of *McAndrew* et al is well known in the art due to its reduction in parts and manufacturing steps and the great number of shapes into which it can be molded.”

Applicant respectfully disagrees with the rejection.

Applicant has amended claim 1 to include the subject matter of claim 6. Consequently, the following remarks pertaining to the rejection of claim 6 are considered to apply to claim 1, as amended.

Applicant submits that there is no suggestion or motivation to modify *McAndrew* and *Herring* in the manner suggested in the Office Action based upon the disclosure in *Centofante*. *Centofante* discloses using injection molding to mold a protective package about a light emitting diode that is already itself mounted to a printed circuit board. *See* col. 6, lines 4-15. In contrast to the Examiner’s interpretation of the disclosure in *Centofante*, a person of ordinary skill in the art

would have been motivated by the disclosure in *Centofante* to modify *Herring* by mounting the incandescent lamp in the socket, which is analogous to mounting the light emitting diode to the printed circuit board, and then molding a protective package over the incandescent light and socket. As described by *Centofante*, the protective package protects the light emitting diode from environmental and atmospheric exposure. Such a protective package is not required for the incandescent lamp in *Herring*, which already includes a glass bulb. Hence, a person having ordinary skill in the art would not perceive that an additional protective package formed by molding is needed in *Herring*. *McAndrew*, which fails to disclose any light source, fails to remedy this deficiency. Accordingly, there is no suggestion or motivation to modify *McAndrew* and *Herring* in the manner suggested by the Examiner based upon the disclosure in *Centofante*. For at least these reasons, Applicant submits that the Examiner has failed to establish *prima facie* obviousness. Therefore, Applicant requests that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

Applicant further submits that there is no suggestion or motivation to modify *McAndrew* based upon the disclosure in *Herring*. A person having ordinary skill in the art would not necessarily consider the teaching in *Herring* of a courtesy light illuminating the interior of a storage console as a teaching to place an electroluminescent lamp in a flip cover for illuminating a switch panel of a door trim panel. A storage console and a switch panel of a door trim panel are positioned at two very different locations inside the interior of the vehicle passenger cabin. The different locations would receive different amounts of natural light during the daytime. The interior of the storage console may require illumination even during the daytime, whereas the switch panel would not normally require illumination during the daytime. When natural light is absent, a storage console and a switch panel of a door trim panel would receive different amounts of lighting from other light sources normally present in the passenger cabin, such as overhead

lighting. A storage console is a recessed receptacle with sidewalls that may shadow the interior, while the switch panel of the door trim panel typically consists of exposed surfaces. For at least these reasons, a person having ordinary skill in the art would not consider the disclosure of a storage console having a lamp in *Herring* to supply a sufficient motivation to modify the panel cover in *McAndrew* to include a lamp. Accordingly, there is no suggestion or motivation to modify *McAndrew* in the suggested manner based upon the disclosure in *Herring*. For at least this additional reason, Applicant submits that the Examiner has failed to establish *prima facie* obviousness. Therefore, Applicant requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 1.

Assuming *arguendo* that a proper motivation were present to combine *McAndrew*, *Herring*, and *Centofante*, which it is not, Applicant submits that the combination of *McAndrew*, *Herring*, and *Centofante* fails to disclose all features set forth in Applicant's claim 1. Specifically, the Examiner contends that *Herring* "teaches lighting for consoles in which the flip cover 22 has a lamp mounted thereto, such that, the inside of the console is illuminated when the flip cover is in the open position." Contrary to the Examiner's contention, *Herring* actually discloses a socket 68 carrying a light bulb 70 that is mounted to a hinge member 40' of a hinge 30. *Herring* further discloses that the item labeled with reference numeral 22 is actually a closure lid; not a flip cover as contended by the Examiner. The closure lid 22 in *Herring* is coupled by the hinge 30 with a storage console 12. Consequently, the light bulb 70 is not mounted to the closure lid 22 in *Herring*, but is instead mounted to a hinge member 40' of a hinge 30 for the closure lid 22. The Examiner has admitted that *McAndrew* fails to disclose a lamp of any kind mounted to the flip cover 40. *Centofante* fails to remedy this deficiency of *McAndrew* and *Herring*. Consequently, the combination of *McAndrew*, *Herring*, and *Centofante* fails to disclose a lamp of any kind that is actually attached to a lid, much less a lamp of any kind that comprises a unitary molded assembly

with a flip panel. For at least this reason, the Examiner has failed to establish *prima facie* obviousness. Therefore, Applicant requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 1.

Furthermore, the combination of *McAndrew*, *Herring*, and *Centofante* fails to disclose an electroluminescent lamp as set forth in claim 1. As recognized by the Examiner, *McAndrew* fails to disclose a light source. *Herring* discloses a conventional incandescent light bulb 70. *Centofante* discloses a light emitting diode 32. Neither an incandescent light bulb nor a light emitting diode has the structure of an electroluminescent lamp. The Examiner has not offered any objective proof that a person having ordinary skill in the art would substitute an electroluminescent lamp for a light emitting diode or an incandescent lamp, as implicit in the Examiner's statement of the rejection. According to MPEP § 2142, impermissible hindsight must be avoided and the Examiner must reach a legal conclusion on the basis of the facts gleaned from the prior art. Because the combination of *McAndrew*, *Herring*, and *Centofante* fails to disclose an electroluminescent lamp, the Examiner has failed to establish *prima facie* obviousness. For at least this additional reason, Applicant requests that the rejection of claim 1 be withdrawn.

With regard to independent claim 8, Applicant incorporates by reference the preceding remarks regarding the lack of a proper motivation to combine *McAndrew*, *Herring*, and *Centofante*. Applicant further submits that *McAndrew*, *Herring*, and *Centofante* fail to teach all claimed features found in independent claim 8. Specifically, independent claim 8 recites "placing an electroluminescent lamp between the mold sections." In contrast, *Centofante* discloses placing a printed circuit board carrying a light emitting diode between mold sections. In addition, independent claim 8 recites "opening the mold sections after the molten polymer resin solidifies and ejecting the automotive interior component having the geometrical shape of the flip cover from the mold." In further contrast, *Centofante* discloses molding a protective package having a

shape characteristic of a protective package over the light emitting diode on the printed circuit board. However, *Centofante* fails to disclose actually molding any object having a geometrical shape of a flip cover that, after molding, is ejected from the mold. For at least these reasons, the Examiner has failed to establish *prima facie* obviousness. Therefore, Applicant requests that the Examiner withdraw the rejection of claim 8.

Claim 9 over McAndrew, Herring, and Centofante in view of Priesemuth

Claim 9 stands rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *McAndrew, Herring, and Centofante* further in view of *Priesemuth* (U.S. Patent No. 5,452,190). Because claim 9 depends from independent claim 8, Applicant submits that this claim is also patentable for at least the same reasons discussed above. Furthermore, this claim recites a unique combinations of elements not disclosed or suggested by the combined disclosures of *McAndrew, Herring, Centofante, and Priesemuth*.

Dependent claim 9 is patentable for additional reasons. Specifically, the Examiner contends that *Priesemuth* “teaches the shaping of the component after it has been ejected from the mold for the purpose of creating indicia or forming a final shape.” Applicant cannot locate this specific disclosure in *Priesemuth* nor can the Applicant locate any other disclosure in *Priesemuth* that describes changing the shape of a component after ejection from a mold. Consequently, Applicant submits that the Examiner has failed to establish *prima facie* obviousness for this additional reason.

New Claims

Claims 10 and 11 are new claims. Claim 10 is a new independent claim that represents the combined subject matter of original claims 1 and 2; the latter of which was considered by the Examiner to be allowable. Claim 11 is a new claim that depends directly from claim 1. Claim 11 is patentable for at least the reasons set forth above with regard to claim 1 and, furthermore, recites a unique combination of elements not disclosed or suggested by the art of record.

Conclusion

Applicant has made a bona fide effort to respond to each and every requirement set forth in the Office Action. In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, this application is submitted to be in complete condition for allowance and, accordingly, a timely notice of allowance to this effect is earnestly solicited. In the event that any issues remain outstanding, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned to expedite issuance of this application.

Applicant does not believe fees are dues in connection with filing this communication. If, however, such petition is due or additional fees are necessary as a result of this communication, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any under-payment or fees associated with this communication or credit any over-payment to Deposit Account No. 23-3000.

Respectfully submitted,
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